the Assets by Area officers under the Area officers Scheme, monitoring of the progress through Monthly, Quarterly, Half-yearly and Annual Periodical Reports, review of the Scheme by the Central level Coordination Committee and Performance Review Committee, Evaluation studies through reputed institutions/organisations, concurrent evaluations etc. An important step taken in this regard recently was holding of the National Conference on "Self Help Group Movement in the Country and the SGSY" at National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), Hyderabad. The participants in the Conference included several Chief Ministers, Ministers of Rural Development from States, Senior Officials from Reserve Bank of India, NABARD, concerned Ministries, Departments and other agencies.

Special Advisory Group to Guide on Water Conservation

2547. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has appointed a Special Advisory Group to guide the people on water conservation methods, rainwater harvesting, etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Ministry to give impetus to the watershed development programme, with a particular reference to Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) and (b) The matter is under active consideration.

(c) In order to give impetus to the Watershed Development Programme, the coverage under the three main programmes namely Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Desert Development Programme (DDP) is being increased year after year. The

Department has sanctioned new projects covering 62 lac ha. in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, as against new projects covering 52 lac ha. during four years from 1995-96 to 1998-99. The budget allocation of the Department of Land Resources has been increased from Rs. 324 crores in 1999-2000 to Rs. 900 crores in 2001-2002.

The Guidelines for Watershed Development have been revised, effective from 1.9.2001, to provide for greater role to Panchayati Raj Institutions, a Twin Track Approach, an Exit Protocol and provision for availing the credit facility from financial institutions to ensure higher value addition to the interventions.

The cost norms for the Watershed Development Projects under the three Programmes have also been enhanced to Rs. 6000/- per ha. from the earlier cost norms ranging from Rs. 3000/- to Rs. 5000/- per ha. w.e.f. 1.4.2000.

Keeping in view the commitment for ongoing watershed projects and budget allocations 166 DPAP projects and 80 DDP projects have been sanctioned for the Programme Districts in Andhra Pradesh during 2001-2002. In addition, 200 Watershed Projects have been sanctioned under Andhra Pradesh Rural Livelihoods Projects aided by the Department for International Development, U.K. Each project covers 500 ha. approximately. In addition, 9 new projects have also been prioritised for sanction under IWDP for covering an area of 50,000 ha. during the year.

Allocations under Drought Prone Areas Programmes

2548. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated to different States under Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) during each of the last three years;

(b) the amount spent by each State of the amount released to them under DPAP;

(c) the year-wise details thereof; and

(d) The specific work undertaken under DPAP in the drought effected in Orissa in these years?